

November 30, 2018

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- [Laws of Florida](#)

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Branch Lobbyists](#)[Information Center](#)[Joint Legislative Committees
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Other Entities](#)

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[Title XXVIII](#)NATURAL RESOURCES; CONSERVATION,
RECLAMATION, AND USE[Chapter 373](#)
WATER
RESOURCES[View](#)
[Cha](#)

373.4598 Water storage reservoirs.—

(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

(a) The Legislature declares that an emergency exists regarding the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries due to the high-volume freshwater discharges to the east and south of the lake. Such discharges have manifested in widespread algae blooms, public health impacts, and extensive environmental harm to wildlife and the aquatic ecosystem. The conditions, as outlined in the state of emergency declared by the Governor under Executive Orders 16-59, 16-155, and 16-156, threaten the ecological integrity of the estuaries and the economic viability of the state and affected communities.

(b) The Legislature finds that increasing water storage is necessary to reduce the high-volume freshwater discharges from the lake to the estuaries and restore the hydrologic connection to the Everglades. CERP projects necessary to reduce the discharges and increase the flows to the Everglades should receive priority funding, such as the Lake Okeechobee Watershed project to the north of the lake; the Everglades Agricultural Area reservoir project to the south of the lake; the C-43 West Basin Reservoir Storage project to the west of the lake; and the Indian River Lagoon-South project to the east of the lake.

(c) The Legislature finds that the rate of funding for CERP must be increased if restoration will be achieved within the timeframe originally envisioned and that the delay in substantial progress toward completing critical elements of restoration, such as southern storage, will cause irreparable harm to natural systems and, ultimately, increase the cost of restoration. The Legislature reaffirms its substantial commitment to the advancement of projects identified as part of CERP work to reduce ongoing ecological damage to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries.

(d) The Legislature recognizes that the EAA reservoir project was conditionally authorized in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 as a project component of CERP. Unless other funding is available, the Legislature directs the district, in the implementation of the reservoir project, to abide by applicable state and federal law in order to do that which is required to obtain federal credit under CERP. If the district implements the EAA reservoir project as a project component as defined in s. 373.1501, the district must abide by applicable state and federal law relating to such projects.

(e) This section is not intended to diminish the commitments made by the state in chapter 373, 2016-201, Laws of Florida.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

(a) “A-1 parcel” means an area of district-owned land located between the Miami Canal and North New River Canal consisting of approximately 17,000 acres which is bordered to the north by private agricultural lands, to the east by U.S. Highway 27, to the south by the Stormwater Treatment Area 3/4, and to the west by the Holey Land Wildlife Management Area and the A-2 parcel.

(b) “A-2 parcel” means an area of district-owned land located between the Miami Canal and the North New River Canal consisting of approximately 14,000 acres of land to the south of the Miami Canal which is bordered to the north by private agricultural lands, to the east by the A-1 parcel, and to the south by the Holey Land Wildlife Management Area.

(c) “Board” means the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund.

(d) “Central Everglades Planning Project” or “CEPP” means the suite of CERP projects

